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15 March 1977

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77-0028

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: George L. Cary, Legislative Counsel

SUBJECT: Request from Richard Sprague, Counsel to the House Select Committee on Assassinations, For Information Concerning Santos Trafficante

1. At about noon yesterday, Richard Sprague called me to say that the Assassinations Committee has subpoenaed Santos Trafficante and that he (Sprague) would like any information we can provide the Committee regarding Trafficante, including his relationships with Johnny Roselli and Sam Giancana, plus any information we have on his relationships with Cubans or with plots against Castro. I told Sprague I would look into the matter and be back in touch with him.

2. After checking with interested offices in the Agency and with the FBI and the Department of Justice, as well as touching base with Hank Knoche and Commander McMahon, I told Sprague last night that our checks thus far had indicated that any information which we might have within the parameters of his request was classified; that since none of the Committee staff have security clearances and have not signed secrecy agreements as originally anticipated, we were not in a position to grant them access to classified information. Sprague had no quarrel with this as such; however, he cited a previous instance in which Hank Knoche, as Acting Director, made a specific exception to normal security procedures so that Sprague could be given access on a one-time basis to a summary prepared by the Agency concerning telephone intercepts of conversations in Mexico City between Lee Harvey Oswald and the Soviet Embassy there in September/October 1973. This step was taken in an effort to correct erroneous information contained in an article by Norman Kempster pertaining to these intercepts.

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Per request of Mr. Sprague

3. I learned today that yesterday afternoon, in connection with Freedom of Information requests by Bernard Fensterwald (who is close to the House Select Committee on Assassinations investigation) and others, the Agency released 24 documents pertaining to the Kennedy assassination. These documents dealt principally with the Jim Garrison allegations in 1967 regarding alleged CIA involvement in the Kennedy assassination. I am contacting Sprague to provide him with copies of the documents released yesterday and any others that are publicly released in these or any other FOIA actions relating to the Kennedy assassination issue. While these FOIA requests do not concern Trafficante and are unrelated to Sprague's request as such, they do, of course, relate to the subject of the Kennedy assassination and are evidence of our willingness to provide Sprague with unclassified information of possible interest to the Committee. With your approval, I will again inform Sprague that while we would provide him with any unclassified information we have (in fact records checked thus far are classified), we will not grant authorization for access to any classified information until appropriate security clearances have been obtained for the staff and secrecy agreements have been signed. This is in keeping with the President's concern about the proliferation of sensitive intelligence information. As you know, the potential for press blow back in this whole area is extremely high since the Assassinations Committee is attempting to convince the House of Representatives of the need for investigations of the John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations. I am keeping Andrew Falkiewicz informed.

4. Our proposal is consistent with the position being taken by Justice and the FBI in connection with similar requests which Sprague has made to them; that is, they are providing him with unclassified information but are not responding to his request for information concerning Trafficante or any other information which is either classified or otherwise considered sensitive.

George L. Cary

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